

Nutrition Standards for All Foods Sold in School as Required by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 vs. Iowa's Healthy Kids Act

As you know Iowa schools have been following the Iowa Healthy Kids Act, which established nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold to students in a la carte, vending, school stores, and regulated fundraising during the school day, since July 1, 2010. Iowa is one of 39 states that have such laws to regulate the competitive foods and beverages sold in schools.

USDA just released new [nutrition standards](#) for foods sold in school other than those foods provided under the school meals program. The standards are a complement to the improved school meal standards. Setting a national baseline will allow every student to enjoy the benefits of healthy snack food choices while providing greater certainty for food and beverage companies. The new standards are expected to go into effect during the 2014-2015 school year, which is at least one full school year after an implementing rule is published.

The proposed standards are part of the Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010, which changed school meals earlier this year, and:

- apply to all foods sold (a) outside the school meal programs; (b) on the school campus; and (c) at any time during the school day (which is defined in the proposed rule)
- apply to vending, ala carte, fundraising, school stores and all other foods sold outside of the school meal programs
- include definitive criteria for calories, fats, sugars, and sodium for foods
- allow schools to sell plain water, plain low fat milk, plain or flavored fat-free milk, approved milk alternatives, and 100% fruit/vegetable juice
- are specific that drinking water must be freely available to children during meal times
- provide additional guidance for fundraisers

What does this mean for Iowa school? Iowa schools will continue to follow the current nutrition standards as set by Iowa's Healthy Kids Act for competitive foods sold in school, until the final federal standards are implemented. Iowa's Healthy Kids Act nutrition advisory panel is due to meet during 2013 to review the nutrition standards (required every 5 years) and make recommendations for change as appropriate. The timing is ideal to consider the newly proposed federal nutrition standards in making recommendations to the Iowa state board for change. States and schools that have stronger standards than what is being proposed will be able to maintain their own policies.

The public is encouraged to review the proposal and to provide comments and information for consideration by USDA. The text of the proposed rule is available at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cga/020113-snacks.pdf>. Once the rule is published in the Federal Register, the public will be able to provide feedback through www.regulations.gov. USDA will seek public comment on the proposal for 60 days.

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